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Book Reviews.

The Religions of India. By EDWARD WASHBURN HOPKINS, PH.D.
(Vol. I of Handbooks of the History of Religions, edited
by Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr.) Boston: Ginn & Co.,
1895. Pp. xvi + 612, 8vo. \$1.50.

It has, indeed, been some time since this work appeared from the press, but its permanent and substantial character is warrant enough for a notice of its contents even at so late a date. It is by all means the finest single work on the religions of India that exists today in any language. The author is the successor of Professor Whitney of Yale University and has admirable qualifications for the task. The book is the first of a series of volumes projected in America and published in Boston. It is a splendid evidence of the interest taken in America in the study of religions. And the author has a splendid subject. India, the mother of religions, has produced some of the most wonderful achievements of human thought, as well as some of the most puerile, some of the most remarkable examples of human perversity, as well as of nobility, magnificent art and architecture, unparalleled ugliness. Full of contrasts, full of mystery, its very name suggests wonder, doubt, admiration, despair. To write its history is impossible; to write the history of its religion is a tremendous task. And yet no man can be educated today in the largest sense of the word who does not know something about the religious thought of this great country. And this is specially important because America seems to mean to the people of India something unspeakably attractive, benign, and remunerative, both in a spiritual and material sense. We are being visited by fakirs of the original type, by Swamis, and by other learned men, who sow seeds of truth and error which they hope will in due time produce an abundant harvest, and who return to inform their credulous countrymen that America is on the eve of conversion to the faith of India. But to speak more seriously, the achievements of Indian religions are worthy of the study of every thoughtful man, and here is a book where they are told with candor and criticism, with sympathy and yet with faithful regard for truth. No book preserves so just a balance in its

selection and discussion of matters as this of Hopkins. While it is not altogether easy reading, owing to the somewhat labored style of the writer, and while the arrangement of material is not always the happiest, yet we cannot but believe that it will be a long time before a better book will be produced on this subject. G. S. G.

The Bible: Its Meaning and Supremacy. By F. W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S., Dean of Canterbury. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. xviii + 359, 8vo, cloth.

In this volume Canon Farrar seeks to do for the doctrine of inspiration what he did for the doctrine of hell in his *Eternal Hope and Mercy and Judgment*, viz., to present clearly the actual teaching of Christianity stripped of all unessential and eccentric opinion. Incidentally, as if to prove to his readers that he has not displaced the Bible from its proper position, he adds—one cannot help feeling to the weakening of the book—a collection of quotations in which various men of various or no creeds pay testimony to Scripture. In none of his works does the author write with greater feeling and earnestness, reaching at times an almost controversial fervor that will hardly aid the book's popularity among those whose opinions its author combats. Canon Farrar makes, if not an impartial student, at least an excellent advocate.

The main purpose of the book is to show the true character of the Bible by defending it from its over-zealous friends. In these friends' theories of verbal inerrancy and plenary inspiration, to say nothing of their casuistical harmonizations and allegorical explanations, Canon Farrar finds the chief explanation of the jeers of skeptics. His method is as follows: After having shown the varied character of the Bible, and the falseness of many current doctrines of inspiration, he proceeds to discuss the effect of the higher criticism upon the worth of Scripture, and thereupon to construct and defend a theory of inspiration which may be summed up in the formula "the Bible contains, not is the word of God." As such it is not infallible in all matters, and "nothing but casuistry and incongruity have resulted from the attempt to transfer it from the region of religious faith to that of exact science (p. xiv). This position naturally leads to a discussion of instances of unjustifiable use of the Scriptures and resulting difficulties.

So general is this treatment, and so prodigal is the author's use of example and quotation, that it is impossible to do much more than consider his general positions as to inspiration. These may be stated